



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

[New Search](#) | [About RIRs](#) | [Help](#)

22 February 2007

NPL102072.E

Nepal: Reports of extortion and kidnapping for ransom by Maoist forces; response by government authorities (January 2006 - December 2006)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

A peace agreement was signed in November 2006 between the government of Nepal and Maoist forces, ending a conflict that had been ongoing for 10 years (BBC 21 Nov. 2006; IHT 2 Dec. 2006; *LA Times* 22 Nov. 2006). The Maoists are reported to have engaged in kidnapping and extortion during the conflict, which resulted in the deaths of as many as 13,000 people (ibid.).

Over the course of the conflict, the Maoists controlled "large swaths" of the countryside (ibid.; *New York Times* 21 Nov. 2006; HRW 2005). In testimony given before the United States (US) Senate Foreign Relations Committee in May 2006, the Research Director of Human Rights Watch (HRW) said that the Maoists were engaged in "widespread...extortion of people living in areas under their control" (HRW 18 May 2006). Likewise, Amnesty International (AI) expressed "serious concerns" about "the large number of people forced to flee from their homes due to threats, extortion, and violence by Maoist cadres" (AI 23 Mar. 2006). In September 2006, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Nepal expressed concerns related to various human rights abuses perpetrated by Maoist forces, including abductions and extortion (UN 25 Sept. 2006).

In spite of the peace agreement, extortion and abductions on the part of Maoist forces continue (US 8 Dec. 2006). The US State Department issued a travel warning stating that "numerous incidents" of kidnapping and extortion have been reported in local media (ibid.). For example, *EKantipur* reports that three students were kidnapped and tortured by Maoists in November 2006 (29 Nov. 2006). Moreover, Reuters Video News (RVN) reports that Maoists are still extorting money from highway truck drivers, in defiance of the peace accord (RVN 2 Dec. 2006). The trucker drivers allege that groups of Maoists demand large sums of money and threaten to physically harm anyone who refuses to pay (ibid.). However, although police authorities are aware that extortion was previously a problem, they say no reports of extortion have been made to them subsequent to the peace deal (ibid.).

Among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate, there was limited information on kidnappings undertaken for the express purpose of extorting ransoms. However, Inter Press Service (IPS) reports that a "splinter Maoist faction," the Terai Jantantrik Liberation Front (TJLF) kidnapped for ransom several government officers in June 2006 (IPS 21 Aug. 2006).

A range of observers, including government officials, diplomats and aid workers reportedly say that the Maoists have continued to recruit villagers into their army, regardless of the peace agreement (IHT 2 Dec. 2006). The larger their forces, the greater presence Maoists will have in the national army - and therefore the greater their political clout (ibid.). However, the Maoists deny they are continuing to add to their forces (ibid.).

There were no reports of a government response to specific incidents of extortion or to kidnappings for the purpose of ransom by the Maoists among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate. However, government forces are reported to have committed human rights violations during the conflict (BBC News 21 Nov. 2006; HRW 1 Dec. 2006). For example, in 2004 HRW reported that government forces engaged in extortion (Oct. 2004, 2). HRW likewise reported that more than one thousand 'disappeared' Nepalis were detained either by the Nepalese army or the Maoists (HRW 1 Dec. 2006). Moreover,

not a single case of enforced "disappearance" or extrajudicial execution has been adequately investigated by civilian judicial authorities, much less brought to court (ibid.).

The ability of the civilian police force to assist in re-establishing law and order faces a number of challenges (ICG 15 Dec. 2006). The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) reports that only 110 of Nepal's 1,135 police stations are "still operational" (SATP 2006). Moreover, the same source states that the "ill-equipped and demoralized" police force focuses "overwhelmingly [on] guarding their own bases rather than engaging in aggressive counter-terrorism operations" (ibid.).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Amnesty International (AI). 23 March 2006. "Nepal: Human Rights Crucial at Dangerous Political Crossroads." <<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGASA310122006>> [Accessed 11 Dec. 2006]

British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). 21 November 2006. "Peace Deal Ends Nepal's Civil War." <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/6169746.stm> [Accessed 12 Dec. 2006]

Ekantipur [Kathmandu]. 29 November 2006. "Maoists Abduct, Torture Students." <<http://www.kantipuronline.com/kolnews.php?nid=92863>> [Accessed 11 Dec. 2006]

Human Rights Watch (HRW). 1 December 2006. "Nepal: After the Peace Agreement, Time for Justice: Army, Maoists Must Account for Killings, 'Disappearances'." <<http://www.hrw.org/english/docs/2006/12/01/nepal14727.htm>> [Accessed 11 Dec. 2006]

_____. 18 May 2006. "The Human Rights Situation of Nepal: Testimony Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee."
<<http://hrw.org/english/docs/2006/05/22/nepal13438.htm>> [Accessed 11 Dec. 2006]

_____. 12 October 2005. Brad Adams. "Nepal at the Precipice."
<<http://hrw.org/english/docs/2005/10/12/nepal11862.htm>> [Accessed 12 Dec. 2006]

_____. October 2004. Vol. 16, No. 12 (c). "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Civilians Struggle to Survive in Nepal's Civil War."
<<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2004/nepal1004/nepal1004.pdf>> [Accessed 11 Dec. 2006]

International Crisis Group (ICG). 15 December 2006. "Executive Summary and Recommendations." *Nepal's Peace Agreement: Making it Work*.
<<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?l=1&id=4577>> [Accessed 20 Jan. 2007].

International Herald Tribune (IHT) [Neuilly, France]. 2 December 2006. "Nepal's Maoist Rebels Reported Still Recruiting and Taxing Despite Peace Deal."
<http://www.ihf.com/articles/ap/2006/12/03/asia/AS_GEN_Nepal_Uncertain_Peace.php> [Accessed 6 Dec. 2006]

Inter Press Service (IPS). 21 August 2006. Suman Pradhan. "Politics - Nepal: And Now Ethnic Separatism." <<http://ipsnews.net/print.asp?idnews=34406>>
[Accessed 11 Dec. 2006]

Los Angeles Times (LA Times). 22 November 2006. Henry Chu. "Nepal Celebrates as Rebels Sign Peace Agreement."
<<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-Nepal22nov22,1,3463408.story?coll=la-headlines-world>> [Accessed 12 Dec. 2006]

The New York Times. 21 November 2006. Somini Sengupta. "Nepal Rebels Sign Peace Accord with Government."
<<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/21/world/asia/21cnd-nepal.html?ex=1321765200&en=46c4f7994cddb9e&ei=5088&partner=rssnyt&emc=rss>>
[Accessed 12 Dec. 2006]

Reuters Video News (RVN). 2 December 2006. "Maoist Extortion."
<<http://rtv.rtrlondon.co.uk/2006-12-02/335689e5.html>> [Accessed 11 Dec. 2006]

South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP). 2006. "Nepal Assessment 2006."
<<http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/nepal/index.html>> [Accessed 11 Dec. 2006]

United Nations. 25 September 2006. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Nepal. "OHCHR-Nepal Calls for an End to CPN-Maoist Abuses, Releases Report." <<http://nepal.ohchr.org/pressrelease.htm>> [Accessed 6 Dec. 2006]

United States (US). 8 December 2006. "Travel Warning: Nepal." Department of State. <http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_927.html> [Accessed 11 Dec. 2006]

Additional Sources Consulted

Internet sites, including: AsiaNews.it, Factiva, National Human Rights Commission of Nepal, Human Rights Organization of Nepal, HimRights, Lifeline.

Oral sources: National Human Rights Commission and Himrights could not provide information within the time constraints of this Response.

The attached reproduction is a copy of an official work that is published by the Government of Canada. The reproduction has not been produced in affiliation with, or with the endorsement of the Government of Canada.